



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

COMMISSIONER WILTON SIMPSON

Background Information

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Division of Plant Industry

Rule 5B-65, Firewood and Unprocessed Wood Products

- Rule became effective August 10, 2010.
- Purpose of this rule is to establish regulations that prevent the introduction of unwanted wood pests and disease pathogens into Florida, and to prevent the spread of these pests within the state.
- Details of this rule may be found at <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=5B-65>.
- The unregulated movement of firewood and other unprocessed wood products create major pathways into the state for harmful pests and diseases.
- DPI worked collaboratively with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, other states and multiple industries to craft a rule that will help deter the introduction of invasive pests that wreak havoc on our forests, agricultural crops and natural environments.
- It costs millions of dollars to try and eradicate these pests, not to mention the tremendous loss of so many life sustaining trees. The impact on the environment can be significant and we need to do everything possible to protect our trees.
- States including Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois have been battling wood-boring insects for some time. Infestations of the Asian long-horned beetle have resulted in the destruction of thousands of maple, elm and other trees in New York and Chicago. The Emerald Ash Borer has killed millions of ash trees in Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and was recently found in Tennessee. Another exotic pest is the Sirex wood wasp that is destroying trees in New York and Canada.
- Florida is currently battling [laurel wilt disease](#), a destructive disease of redbay, avocado and other trees in the laurel family. The disease, caused by a fungus (*Raffaelea lauricola*) carried into trees by the non-native redbay ambrosia beetle (*Xyleborus glabratus*), was first detected in the U.S. near Savannah, Georgia in 2002 and subsequently found in Duval County, Florida in 2005. The

disease was likely introduced into the southeastern US in infested wood products from Asia. Laurel wilt has caused high levels of mortality in redbay trees in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, and has affected several other hosts including sassafras and avocado.

5B-65 Rule Requirements Summary:

- ✓ Commercial shipments of regulated articles will be allowed entry into Florida with a permit. Uncertified or infested shipments of regulated articles shall be quarantined, issued a Stop Sale and Hold Order, or denied entry into Florida.
- ✓ Non-commercial shipments of regulated articles entering the state through the Department's agricultural interdiction stations without certification will be allowed entry only when issued a Report of Non-Commercial (Homeowner) Plants or Firewood Without Certification in Transit from Other States.
- ✓ Commercial shipments of regulated articles moving intrastate are required to be accompanied by a certificate of inspection.
- ✓ Locally produced or harvested firewood and unprocessed wood products harvested or produced within a 50-mile radius of the distribution point and not moved more than 50-miles from the point of origin are exempted and may be transported from areas contiguous to Florida without a certificate of treatment if the articles are accompanied by a proper bill of lading, proof of origin, and any applicable federal certificates for shipments originating from a USDA-regulated area.
- ✓ No locally produced firewood outside Miami-Dade County may enter Miami-Dade County unless treated and certified by the Department.

Rule Exemptions:

- ✓ Cut Christmas trees may enter the state provided they are accompanied by a federal certificate required for movement from regulated areas of the United States or a certificate of inspection issued by the Department of Agriculture in the state of origin.
 - ✓ Primary and secondary forest products originating from states contiguous to Florida and transported from processing at mills and plants may enter the state.
 - ✓ Commercial shipments of processed mulch or processed wood chips for cooking destined for further distribution at retail outlets may enter the state.
- For rule specifics visit <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=5B-65>.

- To obtain copies of relevant documents, contact FDACS plant inspection offices at [Inspector Directory, DPI - FDACS](#)
- State and federal agencies will work with local governments to keep the public involved and to provide updated and accurate information.
- More information can be found at the Department's website at [Firewood Regulations, DPI - FDACS](#)
- DPI Helpline: 1-888-397-1517.